My name is Vivian Villegas. I live on Timbercrest Dr. My previous letter spoke to the numerous physical hazards of pit mining citing impact studies on this subject. But today I’m here to touch on more than the hazards of gravel and sand pit mining.

First I want to talk about the number of violations this company has perpetrated. From 2000 to 2018, Lafarge Aggregates has had 496 violation records amounting to close to 228 million dollars. Of this there were 106 environmental violations (22 of them in IL), (South Elgin, Jollet, Joppa, Sheridan, Morris, North Aurora and Utica) with all of them involving the EPA and many referred to the Justice Department. There were also mining violations and safety and health violations involving the Mine Safety and Health Administration and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

On the www.industriall-union.org site shows numerous citations from unions everywhere that LafargeHolcim keep its word and respect workers lives. With 370 workplace safety and/or health environmental violations, (not including work hour violations), they are hurting their own people. But we know this because we hear the sound of machinery operating well past closing time, and the blasting of C4 into the early am. on the weekends.

So where are the inspectors that come to the pit to see that they are in compliance to the rules and regulations? How do we know they’re keeping their word about anything when they have a record of not keeping their word. Let’s face it, for a more than 30 billion dollar company, 228 million dollars in violations over 18 years, is a pittance to them.

I understand plans for the Proposed Land Use and Reclamation were sent from Lafarge to the original eight residents they sent information to about their desire to rezone. The drawings, were dated 7/25/2019, after the last meeting, I assume, because it was brought to the attention of the Lafarge attorney that nothing had been done to reclaim any of the used land they already had. So I went to the County Building and got my own aerial drawings. There are any number of references on these drawings that are useless to the average person without a background in mining, and/or experience in civil engineering.

In this proposal is a 25’ berm. Is this suppose to prevent dust or is this suppose to be aesthetic? Because if it’s a dust barrier, I highly doubt it will work as it has a wind shadow three times the height of the berm which would be 75’, and you’d have to plant trees as part of a shelterbelt in your implementation to help with that dust. And another thing, reclamation will be completed after three years cessation of mining, material processing or sales operations? How long is that? Another 50 or 60 years?

So what I’d like to know, why has Lafarge not submitted an Implementation and Development Plan. A few drawings is not how it works. Are we just suppose to vote to rezone and trust they are going to be a great neighbors? Are they not already in violation of the (225 ILCS 715) Surface-Mined Land Conservation and Reclamation Act, by not reclaiming stripped land used and left to erode. This Act states they must submit plans to the County to show their intent to develop and reclaim land. This should have been done years ago when they bought out the original owner, Feltes, to show how they would eventually develop the land. This is in direct violation of what LafargeHolcim stands for itself.

I don’t believe they are what we want for Kane County’s 2040 vision nor for the Elburn’s 2040 vision. They didn’t even think of reclamation before they were shown the terrible photos of stripped land, and now they want to be mining for another 50 or so years? This isn’t what we want for us or our children and grandchildren. Please vote NO to rezone.

[Vivian Villegas]